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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/696,709	10/30/2003	Edward W. Merrill	37697-0080	6478
26633	7590	03/30/2005		
HELLER EHRMAN WHITE & MCAULIFFE LLP 1717 RHODE ISLAND AVE, NW WASHINGTON, DC 20036-3001			EXAMINER TRUONG, DUC	
			ART UNIT 1711	PAPER NUMBER
DATE MAILED: 03/30/2005				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b>	<b>Applicant(s)</b>	
	10/696,709	MERRILL ET AL	
	<b>Examiner</b>	<b>Art Unit</b>	
	Duc Truong	1711	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
**Period for Reply**

**A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.**

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2a) This action is FINAL.                    2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) Claim(s) 124-127 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 124-127 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.  
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
  - a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:
    1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
    2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
    3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>110205</u> .	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

**DETAILED ACTION**

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 124-127 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Saum'158 of record on 1449.

The reference discloses a method for fabricating a medical implant of ultrahigh MW polyethylene in that UHMWPE preform is pre-annealed prior to the irradiation step.

(a) In the pre-annealing step, the preform is subjected at a temperature greater than ambient temperature and less than the decomposition temperature of the polyethylene for a period of time greater than about 30 minutes (see col. 6, lines 33-41).

(b) irradiating the polyethylene preform to crosslink the polyethylene preform; and quenching residual free radical in the polyethylene preform (see col. 5, lines 3-32).

Note that the irradiated preform is heated at a temperature at or above the onset of melting temperature of the irradiated heat treated preform materials, about 120 C which is below the melting temperature of the polyethylene, from 135-140 C (see col 5, lines 15-18), and forming a medical implant from the annealed crosslinked preform (see col. 3, lines 64-65).

The disclosure of the reference differs from the instant claims in that it does not disclose the use of a temperature greater than ambient temperature nor specific steps of the claims.

However, the reference does disclose the use of a range of 280°-355°C satisfying for a temperature greater than ambient temperature and the steps of the claimed process are included in the broad teachings of the reference. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to select the range temperature of the pre-annealing step and the steps of the process from the reference within the limitations of the instant claims since they have been shown to be effective in a similar system and thus would have been expected to provide adequate results. There is no showing of unexpected results derived from said selection.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Duc Truong whose telephone number is 571-272-1081. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James Seidleck can be reached on 571-272-1078. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Art Unit: 1711

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



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DUCTRUONG  
PRIMARY EXAMINER